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Security Council

Sixty-third year

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6020th meeting

Thursday, 20 November 2008, 10.30 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Urbina	(Costa Rica)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Grauls
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Tiendrébéogo
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Croatia	Mr. Jurica
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Indonesia	Mr. Kleib
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Ms. DiCarlo
	Viet Nam	Mr. Hoang Chi Trung

Agenda

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia (S/2008/709)

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08-61071 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia (S/2008/709)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Somalia, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Duale (Somalia) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Haile Menkerios, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

It is so decided.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Raisedon Zenenga, Director of the Africa II Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Zenenga to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, the provisions of resolution 1816 (2008) of 2 June 2008 and the agreement with the affected coastal States, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Efthimios Mitropoulos, Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Mitropoulos to take a seat at the Council table.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 11 November 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, in which he requests that the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, Her Excellency Ms. Lila Ratsifandrihamanana, be invited to participate in the consideration of the item, in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Ms. Lila Ratsifandrihamanana.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Ms. Ratsifandrihamanana to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia, document S/2008/709.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Haile Menkerios, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs; Mr. Raisedon Zenenga, Director of the Africa II Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations; and Mr. Efthimios Mitropoulos, Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization.

I now give the floor to Mr. Menkerios, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

Mr. Menkerios: I am grateful for the opportunity to introduce the latest progress report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2008/709), which provides an update on the political, security and humanitarian developments in Somalia and the Djibouti peace process, including the agreement on establishing a unity Government and a cessation of hostilities agreement. The report also describes the status of planning for an international stabilization force, as well

as actions in support of Security Council resolutions 1816 (2008) and 1838 (2008) on combating piracy. The report speaks for itself. Therefore, for the sake of brevity, I shall not go into its content. Permit me, however, to turn to events that took place after the issuance of the report.

Following the signing of the cessation of hostilities agreement in Djibouti between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS) on 26 October, which was part of the ongoing implementation of the Djibouti agreement, two other important events took place during this month. First, on 4 November, the United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) facilitated the travel of the ARS Chairman, Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, to Somalia to mobilize popular support for the Djibouti process. Sheikh Sharif visited the cities of Beletweyne and Jowhar, in south-central Somalia, on what was his first visit to the region since the deployment of Ethiopian forces in late 2006. He was well received by the public, indicating that the Djibouti faction of the ARS continues to enjoy a significant following in south-central Somalia.

Secondly, the withdrawal of Ethiopian forces from locations in Beletweyne and Mogadishu commenced on 17 November, as agreed in the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement. The Ethiopian command handed over its main base in Mogadishu, at the former Ministry of Defence, to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in a smooth transfer of control. Furthermore, field commanders of both TFG and ARS forces are currently engaged in organizing their forces for the implementation of the Agreement. The United Nations is facilitating a workshop this week for TFG and ARS delegates to discuss details of the implementation of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement, as well as advancing arrangements for the creation of joint forces with a troop strength of 10,000.

Hard-line groups, including Al-Shabaab, continue to expand their operations within south-central Somalia. Disparate militia groups, united in their determination to fight the TFG and the Ethiopian forces, have gained military control in strategic areas in the Lower Juba and Lower Shebelle regions, including the port city of Merka, where TFG authority is absent. They are also continuing their sporadic attacks in Mogadishu. That is exacerbating the difficulties already faced in delivering much-needed humanitarian assistance.

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reports that, in October, more than 37,000 people were displaced from Mogadishu as a result of insecurity. Two major non-governmental organizations suspended all their programming in south-central Somalia following a statement issued on 3 October by Al-Shabaab calling for the agencies to cease operations in areas under its control. The suspension of those activities has affected nearly 1 million Somalis in need of food aid.

The agreement on political cooperation signed by the parties on 25 October has given the peace process renewed impetus. It calls for the formation of a broad-based Parliament and unity Government that brings the ARS into the transitional institutions. Various reports indicate that the agreement was received with wide support inside Somalia. A subgroup of the High-Level Committee is working on the details of that agreement. It is expected that the next round of meetings, planned to take place from 23 to 25 November, will make significant progress in that respect.

As stated in the Secretary-General's report, the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) held a special summit of heads of State or Government on Somalia on 29 October, following the signing of the security and political agreement in Djibouti. IGAD leaders agreed that the Djibouti talks remained critical to bringing peace and stability to Somalia and that their initiative should be viewed as complementary to the Djibouti process and its implementation. That principle was further reinforced by an Extraordinary Meeting of the IGAD Council of Ministers in Addis Ababa on 18 November, which underscored the urgent need to move towards the establishment the unity Government.

Tensions remain between President Yusuf and Prime Minister Hussein, with little prospects for reconciliation between the two leaders. The two-week time frame to form a new Cabinet articulated by the IGAD summit on 29 October was not honoured. Subsequently, President Yusuf cast doubts over his full agreement with the IGAD communiqué, stating to Somali members of Parliament that the agreement was not binding in his view.

The President and the Prime Minister traded accusations in public as the deadline for resolving the crisis by 13 November approached and each began to

garner support from members of Parliament. The IGAD Extraordinary Meeting of the Council of Ministers, held in Addis Ababa on 18 November, decided to impose targeted sanctions, such as travel bans and assets freezes, on any Somali, inside the country or abroad, deemed to be obstructing peace. It further threatened to withdraw recognition from leaders who are not cooperating with the peace process. IGAD urged the Security Council to consider doing the same.

The next step in resolving the stalemate will rest with the Transitional Federal Parliament, to whom Prime Minister Hussein intends to submit the names of the new members of the Cabinet for approval. IGAD has urged members of Parliament to return from Kenya to Baidoa, where the majority remained since the IGAD summit in October, to vote on the new Cabinet. Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ould Abdallah has met with both leaders on several occasions, calling for restraint on both sides and urging reconciliation.

The scourge of piracy continues to ravage the waters off the Somali coast. It is closely linked to the state of insecurity inside Somalia and the absence of any effective form of law and order. As stated in the progress report, the Transitional Federal Government has taken steps to coordinate its efforts with the international community to eradicate acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea. Whereas international efforts to reduce the vulnerability of vessels crossing the area have also intensified over the same period, recent events demonstrate the considerable capacity of pirates to hijack vessels and the need to establish appropriate legal mechanisms to hold accountable those responsible for such acts.

UNPOS continues to advance preparations for an international conference on assistance to Somalia, to be held in the first quarter of 2009. The conference will focus on concrete ways to enhance the implementation of the Djibouti agreement on the ground. Three thematic areas are currently being developed for wider consultations with Somali parties and relevant international partners, focusing on political, security and peace support. A high-level steering group under UNPOS leadership will be established in December to oversee preparations and advocacy efforts.

The situation in Somalia remains volatile and the Djibouti process has yet to deliver the improvement in security that we are all working for. We must therefore persevere in our common efforts and ensure sustained support to the peace process.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Menkerios for the information he has provided to the Council.

I now give the floor to Mr. Raisedon Zenenga, Director of the Africa II Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

Mr. Zenenga: Thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to brief the Council on the actions taken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) with respect of the Council's presidential statement of 4 September (S/PRST/2008/33).

In the presidential statement, the Council requested the Secretary-General to undertake three tasks: first, to provide a detailed description of a feasible multinational force; secondly, to provide a detailed concept of operations for a feasible United Nations peacekeeping operation; and, thirdly, to identify and approach States that might contribute the required financial resources, personnel, equipment and services for the envisaged multinational force.

With regard to the first two tasks, the Secretary-General's report (S/2008/709) provides the requested information on the envisaged multinational force, including its tasks, size and area of deployment. The report also explains the phased deployment of the multinational force, leading to a follow-on United Nations peacekeeping operation that would be deployed, as stipulated in resolution 1814 (2008), at an appropriate time and subject to progress on the political process and improvements in the security situation on the ground. The proposed tasks of the follow-on United Nations peacekeeping operation are described in paragraph 49 of the report before the Council.

DPKO sent a planning team to Addis Ababa in September to develop the requested description of the envisaged multinational force jointly with the African Union (AU). It is expected that the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) will form part of the multinational force, as explained in the report. The envisaged follow-on United Nations peacekeeping operation would also absorb AMISOM troops. In that regard, the team of 19 United Nations planning experts that is currently assigned to African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa is, among other things,

providing advice on the deployment of AMISOM contingents in accordance with United Nations standards.

With respect to the third task, DPKO has developed a list of Member States and international organizations identified as possible lead nations or potential troop, financing or equipment contributors to the multinational force. On 18 September, DPKO convened a meeting with members of the Security Council at the level of experts to seek their suggestions and support regarding the mobilization of countries that could contribute to the multinational force. Proposals were received from a number of Council members in that regard.

As indicated in the report of the Secretary-General, on 24 October the Secretary-General wrote to 50 countries identified as potential contributors of either one or all of the needed elements for the multinational force, that is, equipment, troops or funding. He also wrote to three international organizations to appeal for funding and help in mobilizing potential troop contributors. Given the 60-day deadline set by the Security Council, the Secretary-General, in his letters to potential contributors, requested responses by 4 November. However, many Member States have indicated that they will need more time to respond. The first replies are now beginning to trickle in. The few responses received so far are mixed.

To date, we have received a total of seven formal responses. Of these, one Member State expressed support for the multinational force and offered to contribute equipment, airlift capacity or funding, as required, but indicated that it was not in a position to provide the lead contingent or troops. Four Member States advised that they are unable to contribute troops to a multinational force, owing to concerns of overstretch. Two of the three organizations approached expressed readiness to help facilitate funding from their member States.

The remaining 45 countries and one organization approached have yet to respond formally. No country has come forward at this stage to pledge a lead contingent. Several have indicated that they are considering the proposal carefully. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has received and responded to a large number of inquiries from Permanent Missions in New York about the details of the envisaged multinational force, particularly the expected mandate, tasks, composition, areas and duration of deployment, financial implications and support arrangements. On 17 November, the Secretariat convened a meeting of the 50 Member States and three international organizations to whom the letters of the Secretary-General were addressed. At that meeting, we provided additional information based on the inquiries received.

The letters sent to Member States by the Secretary-General were in addition to bilateral meetings he held with several leaders in September, during which he raised this important issue. In doing so, he has reiterated his view that the current conditions in Somalia are not ready for a United Nations peacekeeping operation.

The Council is aware of the need to ensure that any force deploying in the complex conditions in Somalia must have the appropriate military capacities, which would not be available to a typical United Nations peacekeeping force.

As we experienced in the 1990s, a force lacking in the right capabilities can easily get bogged down and fail. It is important to draw lessons from the Somalia operations of the 1990s, in which a multinational force, the Unified Task Force (UNITAF), succeeded in stabilizing Mogadishu and a United Nations peacekeeping force with lesser capabilities failed.

We would like to stress that the multinational force, as described in the Secretary-General's report, is not a maximalist approach. It is a limited, targeted operation, deployed in Mogadishu only. It will have the focused goal of supporting critical aspects of the Djibouti Agreement and preparing the ground for the deployment of a follow-on United Nations peacekeeping operation.

We would like to express our appreciation to Member States that have committed assets to anti-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia, under Security Council resolutions 1814 (2008), 1816 (2008) and 1838 (2008). These crucial operations have been extremely valuable in securing food deliveries for the 3.2 million people in Somalia, who are dependent on humanitarian assistance.

At the same time, we are also mindful of the fact that piracy and the recent terrorist attacks against international targets are only symptoms of the

fundamental problem, which is the state of anarchy in Somalia. These threats to international peace and security cannot be successfully eradicated without tackling the state of lawlessness in Mogadishu.

We believe that the approach pursued by Member States in the efforts to combat piracy sets an example of what is required to tackle the real source of the security challenges in Somalia. We therefore appeal to Member States to form a similar coalition, commit the same level of military capabilities and deploy the multinational force to stabilize Mogadishu and prepare the ground for the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation. That operation would then carry forward the task of consolidating peace, establishing a secure environment in the rest of the country and working with other partners to help rebuild the Somali State.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Zenenga for his statement.

I now give the floor to Mr. Efthimios Mitropoulos, Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization.

Mr. Mitropoulos (International Maritime Organization): Thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the opportunity to brief the Security Council on a matter of grave concern to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the maritime community at large, namely the worryingly escalating incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships in the waters off Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden.

Since the matter was first brought to the attention of the Council by the IMO in 2005, the Organization and the maritime community have appreciated very much the response of the Secretary-General and the Security Council to our requests for action and support, as evidenced by the presidential statement issued on 15 March 2006 (S/PRST/2006/11) and resolutions 1816 (2008) and 1838 (2008), respectively adopted on 2 June and 7 October 2008.

In spite of the temporary improvement of the situation following the Council's action, the situation, as brought to our attention on a daily basis in recent months, leaves much to be desired in terms of our common efforts to stem the unlawful acts we are discussing here today.

We are particularly concerned, not only by the frequency of the reported attacks against innocent merchant ships sailing off the coast of Somalia, in the Gulf of Aden and most recently in the wider area of the West Indian Ocean while peacefully serving the international seaborne trade, but also by the ferocity of the attacks and the risk they pose to seafarers and the marine environment.

Against a total of some 440 acts of piracy and armed robbery reported to have taken place off the coast of Somalia since we started compiling relevant statistics at IMO, this year alone, more than 120 attacks have been reported, resulting in more than 35 ships having been seized by pirates and more than 600 seafarers having been kidnapped and held for ransom. Currently, 14 ships and some 280 seafarers are being held hostage in Somalia. The most disturbing news is that two seafarers have already lost their lives in similar incidents.

According to information, the attackers invariably follow two patterns. They either attack ships on the high seas, not unusually at considerable distances from the shore, allegedly making use of "mother ships", as has been the case with their audacious hijacking, only last Saturday, of the fully laden ultra-large crude carrier, Sirius Star, in the Indian Ocean some 450 nautical miles from the coast of Kenya; or they attack and hijack them in Somalia's territorial sea, sometimes under the watchful eyes of warships outside those waters which, until the adoption of resolution 1816 (2008), were not empowered to intervene for fear of breaching international law.

Our concerns in this most unwarranted case are threefold. First, there is a need to protect seafarers, fishermen and passengers on ships sailing off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden.

Secondly, there is a need to ensure the safe delivery of humanitarian aid to Somalia effected by ships chartered by the World Food Programme. Let us not forget that, as the Secretary-General recognizes in his report, which was just introduced, section V on humanitarian aid states, "[s]ome 90 per cent of food shipments to Somalia go by sea" (*S/2008/709, para. 72*).

Our third concern is to preserve the integrity of the shipping lane through the Gulf of Aden, given its strategic importance and significance to shipping and trade East and West of the Suez Canal.

I wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the efforts of members of the international community, alliances of States and regional organizations, including in particular NATO and the European Union, to address the issue by dispatching naval forces and military aircraft to patrol the vast area off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden and by escorting vessels used by the World Food Programme to provide humanitarian relief to the Somali people.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia for its cooperation, and also to say that I was sorry that our communication to the Permanent Representative of Somalia reached him belatedly.

Because of the extensive coastline of Somalia — 2,105 nautical miles or 3,898 kilometres in total, of which 659 nautical miles or 1,204 kilometres are in the Gulf of Aden — the need for as many naval vessels and military aircraft as possible to do the job is more than obvious, until, of course, political developments stabilize the situation on land and we succeed in gradually eradicating piracy at sea.

Notwithstanding IMO's prime concern over the safety of the lives of seafarers whose ships sail off the coast of Somalia, the strategic importance of the Gulf of Aden makes it imperative that this shipping lane, which serves more than 12 per cent of the total volume of oil transported by sea, not to mention commodities carried by bulk carriers and finished goods transported by container ships, is adequately protected against any acts that might disrupt the flow of traffic therethrough.

Were this to happen and ships bound for Europe, or vice versa, were diverted through the Cape of Good Hope, a series of negative repercussions would ensue. Among those, I would mention the extra mileage to run — almost double that for a typical voyage from, say, Ras Tanura to Gibraltar; the prolongation of the same voyage by almost 12.5 days at a speed of 15 knots, thus delaying the replenishment of Europe and the Americas in energy stocks; the additional need for some 750 tons of fuel per ship and an additional volume of some 2,335 tons of carbon dioxide emitted by the additional fuel burnt; a potential increase in freight rates, which would initially more than double if all ships were diverted around the Cape, subsequently settling at about 25 to 30 per cent higher; and, of course, economies and the consumer would eventually be hurt to some extent.

To bring the situation under control, safeguard the lives of seafarers, ensure the uninterrupted flow of humanitarian aid to Somalia and prevent the negative repercussions I just mentioned, IMO would appreciate the Security Council's taking appropriate action to extend the validity of the mandate in paragraph 7 of resolution 1816 (2008); to call upon States interested in the safety and environmentally sound function of shipping activities, and that have the capacity to do so, to take part actively in the fight against piracy and armed robbery against ships, including mother ships, off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden; to strengthen and enhance the provisions of resolutions 1816 (2008) and 1838 (2008), particularly with respect to having clear rules of engagement for participating units to facilitate the disruption of pirate operations; and to urge States, with due regard to their obligations under international law, to establish an effective legal jurisdiction to bring alleged offenders to justice.

For IMO's part, we are doing everything possible to increase awareness of the problem and, in cooperation with the shipping industry, to advise ships to take practicable avoidance, evasion and defensive measures, while, through our technical cooperation programme, we assist countries in the region to build capacity to add their contribution to the overall efforts, including putting in place any necessary relevant legislation. We look forward to the high-level meeting we are organizing to take place in Djibouti in January in order conclude a regional agreement of cooperation to combat piracy and armed robbery.

The regrettable developments off the coast of Somalia clearly indicate that the perpetrators of the unlawful acts we have heard about frequently in recent months show a continuing disrespect for the international community, their operations constituting, at the same time, a blunt provocation to civil society and the rule of law. At IMO, we believe that we have to act — and act fast and with firm determination — to rid the world of this modern scourge. A coordinated and coherent response at the international and national level is therefore necessary for the safety and well-being of seafarers, for the seamless delivery of humanitarian aid to Somalia, for the protection of the marine environment against casualties that may have a catastrophic impact on it, and for the shipping industry to continue to serve the seaborne trade and the world economy efficiently and effectively. The Council's decisions will be instrumental to achieving these

objectives. IMO stands by to assist in any way that might be required.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Somalia.

Mr. Duale (Somalia): Mr. President, I would like to seize this opportunity to thank you for allowing me to brief the Security Council on recent developments in Somalia. Some of this briefing has already been done.

I would also express our profound appreciation to the Secretary-General and his Special Representative for the valuable support they have offered to the Somali people during this very difficult time in our history. I also wish to thank Mr. Haile Menkerios, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, for his comprehensive briefing; Mr. Raisedon Zenenga, Director of the Africa II Division of the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations; and Mr. Efthimios Mitropoulos, the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), who has briefed us and requested assistance in order to further his organization's anti-piracy efforts in Somalia.

As has been mentioned, there have been a number of significant political developments in the search for peace in Somalia, not only by the Somalis, but also by the international community, the African Union (AU), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Secretary-General and his Special Representative.

The Somali Government has signed a peace agreement with opposition groups, which was jointly agreed to by the High-Level Committee and the Joint Security Committee, and agreed to the terms of reference of those Committees. Concrete steps have already been taken, some of which have been mentioned by our briefers, as stipulated in the agreement between the two parties. This development shows that the leadership of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) has clearly demonstrated its commitment to reconciliation between the Government of Somalia and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia, and that it will continue to do so.

However, we believe that the greatest challenge to peace and stability in Somalia is not simply a political problem, but also a lack of security. The Transitional Federal Government does not have the capacity to defend and control the entire country, as its security apparatus lacks adequate equipment and training and has no financial resources in place.

The position of the Transitional Federal Government was exacerbated by inadequate financial support from the international community to strengthen security in the country and recruit new forces. That is why Somalia's challenges show the link between humanitarian efforts and improvement in the security situation in the country. We, therefore, strongly urge the international community to provide humanitarian assistance to Somalia to address these challenges, as well as to help strengthen security in the country.

The other challenge, as stated earlier in this meeting, is the issue of piracy. The Transitional Federal Government would like once again to convey its sincere gratitude to those Member States and regional and international organizations that are assisting it in combating the scourge of piracy off Somalia's coast. A detailed statement on this matter has already been given by the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

The Transitional Federal Government renews its request for the help of the Security Council in securing the international and territorial waters off the coast of Somalia for the safe conduct of shipping and navigation.

We urge and welcome the renewal for one year of the authorization provided to those cooperating with the TFG, as stipulated in paragraph 7 of Security Council resolution 1816 (2008), as well as other assistance that the Security Council may deem necessary to provide. We also wish to appeal both to the Security Council and to other nations and international organizations to support such anti-piracy efforts and to get involved as far as possible in securing our waters.

Similarly, I humbly remind the Security Council of a statement made previously by His Excellency Ambassador Kumalo of South Africa upon the adoption of Security Council resolution 1838 (2008). The Ambassador said,

> "we would like to put it on record that the threat to international peace and security in Somalia originates in the conflict ... [and] the conflict in

Somalia cannot be countered solely through maritime security actions. Piracy is part of the larger problem ...". (*S/PV.5987, pp. 2-3*)

In this connection, we fully agree with our South African colleague that piracy is only one of many security challenges we face in Somalia, and the Council should seek to address the threat of peace and security in Somalia in a comprehensive way.

As the people of Somalia tackle the challenges they confront, they will need sympathetic understanding and the support of the international community. The search for peace and prosperity in Somalia will not be smooth; nor will full peace be achieved quickly. We know that all too well. Recently, the Somali Government faced a constitutional crisis, as mentioned by previous speakers.

I can assure the Council, however, that the leadership of the Transitional Federal Government will overcome the current constitutional crisis by exercising leadership and wisdom at this critical time. But, we strongly urge countries, both in the region and worldwide, to allow political space for the leadership of the TFG to overcome the constitutional crisis. We urge the Council to do the same.

Similarly, the task in Somalia is not so much one involving a proliferation of initiatives led by the various interlocutors. The main task lies in helping the Somali Government and opposition groups that have agreed to implement the Djibouti agreement to devise institutions that are trusted and legitimate and that command the allegiance of the population of Somalia. That is the goal of the Somali Government, and I think it is still a reasonable aspiration for the international community and the Somali people.

Therefore, we urge the countries in the region and organizations, such as the Intergovernmental Authority of Development, the African Union, the League of Arab States, United Nations agencies and Member States to work with the leadership of, and in coordination with, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, as the main interlocutor, in support of the peace process.

In conclusion, it is not enough to observe, as has been done in the past, a policy of "wait and see". Somalia needs a serious sponsor, as has been mentioned, to push the peace forward. We rely on the Security Council and the United Nations Secretariat to identify and make possible urgent steps to implement the proposals made by the Secretary-General, as early as possible, because we are facing a lot of challenges, insecurity and a humanitarian disaster.

It is my sincere hope that the international community and the Security Council will respond positively this time in a more proactive way and in a timely fashion to our appeal for the urgent and immediate deployment of a United Nations stabilization force, a multinational force and, at a later date, when it is more convenient, a United Nations peacekeeping operation.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Permanent Representative of Somalia for his statement.

I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Lila Ratsifandrihamanana, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations.

Ms. Ratsifandrihamanana: Sir, the African Union welcomes your initiative in organizing this timely meeting, and our appreciation goes to Under-Secretary-General Menkerios and all those who have briefed the Council this morning.

We commend the report of the Secretary-General, which comprehensively described the situation on the ground, including the relentless efforts being deployed by the Somali parties themselves and the Joint Security Committee established pursuant to the Djibouti agreement.

At the outset, I should like to draw the attention of the Council to an African Union (AU) press release issued yesterday, 19 November 2008, which states,

> "The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Mr. Jean Ping, is following with deep concern the recent developments in Somalia. He is particularly disturbed by the political impasse and the rift within the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) top leadership.
>
> "The Chairperson expresses deep concern at the recent increasing acts of piracy off the coast of Somalia. This is a clear indication of the further deterioration of the situation with far reaching consequences for this country, the region and the larger international community. He calls for more sustained and coordinated efforts by the international community to support the

peace efforts in Somalia including the early deployment of United Nations Peacekeeping Forces.

"[Furthermore,] the Chairperson welcomes the communiqué of the 30th Extraordinary Session of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Council of Ministers on the prevailing political and security situation in Somalia, held in Addis Ababa on 18 November 2008, and expresses his strong support to the stand taken by the IGAD Council of Ministers. The Chairperson has called upon the leadership of the TFG to return speedily to Mogadishu and focus on the issues of governance, particularly, the implementation of the Transitional Federal Charter, as well as the Djibouti Peace Agreement and the IGAD Declaration of 29 October 2008."

That press release recalls the communiqué of the meeting of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on the situation in Somalia held in Addis Ababa on 11 November 2008. In its communiqué, the African Union Peace and Security Council welcomed the signing in Djibouti on 26 October 2008 of an agreement on the Modalities for the Implementation of the Cessation of Armed Confrontation between the TFG and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS). The Peace and Security Council commended the TFG and the ARS for this further step in the implementation of the Djibouti Agreement of 19 August 2008 and urged them to comply scrupulously with their commitments.

The African Union Peace and Security Council further welcomed the Declaration adopted by the thirteenth Extraordinary Session of the IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government, held in Nairobi on 29 October 2008. The Peace and Security Council expressed its full support for the Declaration and urged all Somali parties concerned to implement fully and in good faith the decisions of that summit, in conformity with the established timeframe set out in the Declaration.

I should like to underscore the African Union Peace and Security Council's appeal to the United Nations Security Council contained in that communiqué to take necessary steps to authorize the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Somalia as a matter of urgency. This call has been reiterated by the Somali Government and other Somali parties on various occasions.

As noted in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/709), the African Union is deploying all possible efforts to strengthen the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) as it continues to carry out its work on the ground, pending the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation. African Union member States were called upon to contribute additional troops to AMISOM to enable it to reach its authorized capacity of 8,000 troops, an increase from the current level of approximately 3,000 troops from Uganda and Burundi. An appeal has been launched to the international community to provide the necessary financial and logistical support to sustain AMISOM.

We welcome the initiative of the Secretary-General towards the deployment of a multinational stabilization force, as provided for under the Djibouti agreement. We restate the readiness of the African union to work towards the integration of AMISOM into that force, with the hope that this can help in finalizing the conditions for a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Somalia.

As indicated by Director Zenenga there is still some hesitation regarding this multinational stabilization force. We therefore urge all Member States, not only those who have been contacted by the Secretary-General, to respond positively and to share the responsibility for establishing this multinational stabilization force.

While all indicators point to a deterioration of the situation on the ground in Somalia, we believe it is most crucial to take advantage of the window of opportunity provided by the commitment of various stakeholders and the Somali parties themselves towards achieving lasting peace and security. We urge the Security Council to take a decisive step that could enable us to address the challenges on the ground. Piracy, armed robbery, violence, trafficking, despair and the threat of terrorist attacks, just to name a few, are all only the external symptoms of the deeper problems suffered by Somalia for nearly two decades. I would like to draw the attention of the Council in particular to the extensive violence, suffering and death being visited upon innocent women and children in Somalia.

In conclusion, we call upon this Council to provide a response at the current stage that would

reflect the faith and trust of Somali, Africa and the entire international community in the Security Council as the custodian of international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Ms. Ratsifandrihamanana for her statement.

I shall now give the floor to members of the Council.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): We thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the situation in Somalia as well as the recommendations on actions that the international community could take to resolve the conflict, as detailed in the Secretary-General's report (S/2008/709).

The report by the Secretary-General, confirmed by information provided by humanitarian organizations, indicates that the security and humanitarian situation in Somalia is deteriorating very fast and that it has resulted in extensive loss of life among the civilian population, in malnutrition and in an increase in the number of internally displaced persons.

None of this is new. This situation in Somalia has been allowed to deteriorate to this point due to the continuing conflicts between the various groups in Somalia and, to a large extent, by the inaction of the international community. And the sad part is that there is an acute danger that it could very well get worse. Not even humanitarian workers, the United Nations nor the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) are being spared; they are also being targeted by attacks on an almost daily basis. We of course condemn these attacks in the strongest possible terms.

We also want to acknowledge the efforts of some groups in Somalia to bring peace to their country and we welcome the signing on 26 October of the agreement on cessation of armed confrontation as well as the further discussions between the Transitional Federation Government (TFG) and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS) to implement the very important Djibouti agreement. The parties must be supported through capacity-building and confidence-building and through the provision of minimum security.

However, lasting peace will continue to elude us as long as certain groups remain outside of the peace process. We call upon all those groups which have not yet joined the Djibouti agreement to do so to enable Somalia to continue to move forward.

It is also of concern to my delegation that there are reported disagreements even within the Transitional Federal Government. It is time for the leadership of Somalia to muster the political will and work for the interests of Somalia, which would bring about peace in that country.

The most important point, however, is that the Council mandated the Secretary-General, among other things, to elaborate contingency plans and provide a detailed description of feasible support that could be given to Somalia. We thank Assistant Secretary-General Menkerios and the representative of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations for their briefings.

However, as the Secretary-General himself points out, much of what could be done is dependent on positive responses from the Member States. That raises the question: If there is no positive response from the Member States, what is to happen to the Somali people? Are they to be left just to suffer until, somewhere down the line, there will be those who may wish to help? The Secretary-General says in paragraph 52 of his report that, indeed, he has made all kinds of efforts, including personally visiting and talking to some of the countries that could assist, but so far there has been very little support. The question then becomes: What is the role of the Security Council in a case to which Member States are not responding? Unfortunately, we are the ones who carry the mandate for the maintenance of international peace and security. What, then, is the Council's responsibility in such a situation? I hope that is the question we will debate among ourselves, because the people of Somalia cannot be left to the goodwill of Member States that may choose to assist down the line.

The many reports of acts of piracy have been very worrisome to us and we condemn the piracy phenomenon, which seems to be growing very, very fast. The representative of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) pointed out how many ships and thousands of people have been victims of that piracy. However, the piracy will never be answered, as we have always argued, until we address the situation in Somalia. Yes, piracy gets the publicity. It gets the attention of all of us, but I think it is time that the people inside Somalia also catch our attention. We

hope that the suggestions of the representative of the IMO will be helpful to the Security Council assisting those countries that are monitoring the waters of Somalia, but we hope that the Council has equal energy also to remember the people of Somalia.

Mr. Ripert (France) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank the previous speakers, especially the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), to which resolution 1816 (2008) entrusted an important role, as well, of course, as the Assistant Secretary-General of the Department of Political Affairs for his briefing and the Permanent Representative of Somalia.

We have before us a report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/709) that deals with several separate issues: the general situation in Somalia from the political, security and, above all, humanitarian points of view; fundamentals concerning the planning of a possible international force, be it a multinational force or, later, a peacekeeping operation; and, lastly, the issue of combating sea piracy. Naturally, we will need to have more technical discussions on the second issue, and here I would like only to touch on the fight against piracy.

As he announced here before the Council in September 2007, last year the President of the French Republic took the initiative of ensuring the military protection of the maritime convoys of the World Food Programme, which was taken up by the Netherlands, Denmark and Canada. However, all States members of the European Union have mobilized to fight piracy more broadly on the basis of resolutions 1814 (2008), 1816 (2008) and 1838 (2008). On 10 November, the European Union Council took a very important step by setting up a European Union naval operation off the coast of Somalia for a period of one year. The operation will be launched on 8 December with the full agreement and full support of the Somali authorities. It will mobilize five to six ships, with air capability, and will protect the World Food Programme convoys and vulnerable ships and curb acts of piracy and armed attacks off the coast of Somalia. Yesterday, the Secretary-General welcomed the operation.

A great many States — the countries of the European Union and NATO, the Russian Federation and major Asian States, such as India — have indicated that they wished to respond to the Security Council's appeal to act. Thus, the European Union is not the only Power to act and does not wish to be so. The stakes are huge, as the Secretary-General of the IMO reminded us. That naturally raises the issue of coordinating the efforts of the international community. The European Union has set up its own coordination cell to be the sole interlocutor with all its partners. It would like the Secretary-General to set up a unified focal point within the Secretariat for all its services, which would act as interlocutor with the European Union.

We believe that beyond that, the Secretary-General can also play a role in helping to reinforce international mobilization, but, in our view, real military coordination would not be feasible.

In that regard, we appeal to the Council to remain seized to extend the mandate of resolution 1816 (2008), which expires at the beginning of December and is necessary to continue fighting piracy off the coast of Somalia. We collectively voiced our intention to do so when we unanimously adopted resolution 1838 (2008).

Lastly, I would like to return to the link between the fight against piracy and the tragic situation of the Somali people. It is clear that the deep-rooted causes of the phenomenon that the country is currently experiencing are war, a weak State, lack of economic opportunity and, without doubt, the acts of criminal groups, which are the deep-seated causes of piracy. The latter will be eradicated once and for all only when the roots of the conflict are addressed.

No anti-piracy operation can in any way replace the action of an international force on the ground. France fully supports the idea that a robust multinational force, appropriately equipped, be authorized by the Security Council to deploy to Mogadishu. That is a necessary stage to create the conditions for the future deployment of a peacekeeping operation, which seems vital.

Mr. Mantovani (Italy): First of all, I wish to thank the Costa Rica presidency for organizing this comprehensive discussion on Somalia and the briefers for their inputs. The representatives of Somalia and the African Union also provided valuable perspectives and expectations of what this Council can do that must be fully taken into account.

The security and humanitarian situations continue to deteriorate in Somalia. The kidnapping of hostages is a particularly disturbing threat that is currently

affecting several countries, including mine. Italy urges all Somali parties to cease violence and join the political process. The real factor that is limiting the effectiveness of the current peace efforts is the slow implementation of the Djibouti agreement. The parties have yet to demonstrate that the cessation of armed confrontation is producing some results on the ground, and there is a need to start immediately implementing the joint force of the Transitional Federal Government and the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia, as well as to initiate talks on the projected unity Government. We look forward to the next meeting of the parties in Djibouti this coming Saturday to advance that process.

It is essential, in our view, that the transitional federal institutions overcome their differences as a matter of utmost urgency. Failure to do so will result in the collapse of more than six years of peace efforts since the start of the reconciliation conference in Kenya led by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). We welcome IGAD's renewed efforts to assist the transitional federal institutions in that endeavour.

The United Nations has a key role to play. The vigorous and effective leadership of Special Representative Abdallah is critical to the success of the peace process, but the United Nations can also actively sustain the present political dynamic through a number of other ways: financial aid, technical assistance to the parties to the Djibouti agreement and support for the setting up of joint forces.

Coming to the security options, we have taken note of the efforts of the Secretariat to develop a multinational force for Somalia. Due to the urgency of the matter, we think that a clear time frame must be established, by which either the multinational force materializes or we move to different options. In that regard, we have taken note with interest of paragraph 52 of the report (S/2008/709), in which the Secretary-General states his intention to submit alternative proposals, and we would request the Secretariat to start planning now for those proposals as there is no reason to wait any longer.

We also underscore the need to continue to provide financial and other support to the African Union Mission in Somalia. In fact, while we hear one report after another from the Secretariat, the African troops have been the only ones taking risks on the ground, since early 2007. I believe that they deserve not just the highest appreciation, but tangible support, as well as a clear perspective for United Nations re-hatting.

On the issue of piracy off of the coast of Somalia, my delegation would like to invite Council members to begin working as soon as possible on the renewal of the authorization contained in operating paragraph 7 of resolution 1816 (2008) and perhaps the upcoming resolution could also provide the opportunity to address the issue of jurisdiction over apprehended individuals.

Italy supports the swift action taken by the international community and is currently providing command and two units to the NATO naval group operating in the area. Italy also supports the launch by the European Union of Operation Atalanta, which has been mentioned and described by the French delegation, and we would urge strengthened coordination among all the various initiatives in place.

Mr. Dabbashi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish to begin by thanking the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) as well as the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, the Director of the Africa II Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the representative of Somalia, for their briefings.

The security and humanitarian situation in Somalia is of great concern to my country and to the international community, despite the progress achieved in the negotiations between the Transitional Federal Government and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia. Acts of violence and war continue, and in that respect we reiterate our condemnation of the attack that took place in October 2008 that targeted the office of the United Nations Development Programme. We renew our condolences regarding the victims of that attack.

There is no doubt that recent developments on the ground could represent a regression in the efforts that have been made by Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and could negate all the hopes generated by the Djibouti agreement and the ceasefire agreement.

Today, we call upon all of the parties in the Transitional Federal Government to overcome their

differences and to unify their efforts to hasten the formation of a new Government to serve the people of Somalia. We also call for the coordination of all regional and international initiatives and efforts in keeping with the role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, in order to ensure that these efforts are mutually supportive, rather than parallel efforts.

The humanitarian situation in Somalia is deteriorating daily. Humanitarian organizations and emergency aid workers are targeted by threats and attacks from armed groups. The situation has caused certain organizations to suspend their activities, which has had an adverse impact on nearly one million people, who require emergency humanitarian assistance. The humanitarian situation in central and southern Somalia is growing particular dire, because those areas are not covered by humanitarian organizations.

Another humanitarian problem has been caused by the violence between factions, which is of concern to us. That problem affects Somali refugees and displaced persons. Fighting in Mogadishu has forced 108,000 people to flee the city, and the number of displaced persons now exceeds 1.3 million.

We also note the acts of piracy off the coast of Somalia, which pose a real threat to international shipping. International Maritime Organization statistics give a sombre picture of the situation. However, there has been a swift positive reaction on the part of several countries to Security Council resolution 1816 (2008) concerning the fight against piracy. We appreciate the efforts made by all countries that have cooperated with the Transitional Federal Government in the fight against piracy and armed maritime robbery. We support the Secretary-General's appeal to Member States to participate in those efforts.

In that respect, our appreciation goes in particular to States that have ensured the delivery of humanitarian assistance to those who need it. We support the European Union's proposal that DPKO play a role in the coordination of operations to fight piracy off the coast of Somalia. We hope that DPKO will study the proposal and that it will formulate an opinion on it.

We are convinced, however, that piracy is a result of the conflict and instability in Somalia and that it will end once a political solution to the problems of Somalia is found. Such a solution must be based on a comprehensive approach in order to deal with all the issues related to Somalia.

Now more than ever, there is an urgent need to deploy an international force on the ground, whatever it may come to be called. We believe that the recent agreement signed by the Transitional Federal Government and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia could form the basis for the deployment of such a force. The agreement on the cessation of armed confrontation signed on 26 October, following a meeting of the High-Level Committee, constitutes an important step in that direction. There is no doubt that priority should now be given to the establishment of an international stabilization force and to strengthening the African Union Mission in Somalia so that it can be an integral part of that force.

Unfortunately, however, the report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/709) provides no timeline for the establishment of such a force, and the two briefings we heard today from representatives of the Secretariat raise further concerns for us. If we understand matters correctly, it was observed that conditions are not ripe for the deployment of such a force, owing to the continuing precarious security situation. But we all know that the United Nations has gained a great deal of experience in the deployment of peacekeeping forces and multinational forces in conditions of instability in their areas of operations.

If we do not wish to deploy a force at this time, what are the alternatives? Can we tell the millions of suffering Somalis that we cannot help them or provide aid? I do not think that is a solution. In my view, we must take advantage of the Djibouti agreement in order to pacify the situation and to begin immediately, in collaboration with the African Union, to deploy a stabilization force in Somalia. We support the Secretary-General's appeal to Member States to contribute troops, equipment and financial resources for the establishment of such a force, and we urge countries in a position to do so to respond to that appeal so that we can buttress the Djibouti agreement and restore peace and stability to Somalia.

It is our hope that we will very soon hear the views of the Secretary-General, as promised in paragraph 52 of his report, including the alternative proposals of which he wrote in that paragraph.

Mr. Tiendrébéogo (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Menkerios, Mr. Zenenga and Mr. Mitropoulos for their illuminating briefings. Our thanks go also to the Permanent Representative of Somalia and to the Permanent Observer of the African Union for their statements this morning.

Let me begin by reaffirming my delegation's firm condemnation of acts violence and violations of human rights in Somalia, in particular those perpetrated against the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and humanitarian personnel, and recently, the 29 October suicide bomb attack against the office of the United Nations Development Programme in Hargeisa. We expect the perpetrators of such acts to be brought to justice.

We welcomed the August signing of the Djibouti agreement, and we call upon the signatories to commit themselves, unreservedly and in good faith, to compliance with it, in conformity with commitments they themselves undertook. Moreover, all Somalis must join in the process that is now under way. Here, we welcome the notable progress attained in the negotiations between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS) and the joint decisions that have been taken, including on a cessation of armed confrontation between the TFG and the ARS, a time frame for the withdrawal of Ethiopian forces and the deployment of a joint security force. The 26 October signing of a ceasefire agreement is also to be welcomed, and we look forward to its full implementation. Unfortunately, the present institutional impasse threatens to undermine these achievements. That is why we believe that every effort should be made to overcome it as quickly as possible.

Like the parties themselves, my delegation attaches the greatest importance to the role of the High-Level Committee provided for in the Djibouti agreement, which is jointly chaired by the United Nations and the African Union. We call upon the international community to provide the Committee with all the support it needs to assist the parties in abiding by their commitments. My delegation welcomes the willingness of the African Union to strengthen AMISOM in support of the implementation of the Djibouti agreement.

On the deployment of an international stabilization force, my delegation takes note of the plan formulated by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and of the initiatives undertaken by the Secretary-General in that regard. We await with interest the recommendations promised in paragraph 52 of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/709). In the meantime, my delegation regrets that responses to the Secretary-General's appeal have been weak and hesitant. We hope that there will be a speedy response to his appeal and to that of the Transitional Federal Government — reaffirmed this morning by the Permanent Representative of Somalia — to bring about the deployment of a multinational force and, then, a peacekeeping operation in Somalia.

But it is the duty of the Council to anticipate events and the responses that will be proposed by the Secretary-General, so that it can find possible approaches to addressing the matter.

The increase in acts of piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia exacerbates the security, socio-economic and humanitarian situation in the country. We welcome the assistance provided by a number of States in ensuring the safety of maritime transport in the area. But we must recall that combating this lack of security requires the resolution of the underlying causes of the crisis in Somalia. We are grateful to the International Maritime Organization for its efforts, and we consider that its recommendations merit the closest attention.

My delegation wishes in conclusion to reaffirm its hope that the partnership between the African Union and the United Nations will continue, with a view to strengthening the Union's institutional capacity to support AMISOM, which for the moment remains the sole credible force in Somalia. We join the Secretary-General in calling upon the international community to provide AMISOM with all possible financial and logistical assistance. Finally, as we have said here on numerous occasions, the credibility of the United Nations and, in particular, of the Security Council is at stake in Somalia.

Mr. Kleib (Indonesia): Let me begin by joining previous speakers in thanking Assistant Secretary-General Menkerios and Mr. Zenenga for their briefings. We welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of Somalia and the Permanent Observer of the African Union. We also welcome the participation of the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization in today's

meeting, in accordance with resolution 1816 (2008). We are thankful for their respective statements.

The statements that we have heard this morning and the Secretary-General's report (S/2008/709) clearly caution us that, while we may have reason to be optimistic that the parties in Somalia are going to make further progress in forging a political solution, their efforts are taking place against the tide of the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation. It is most unfortunate that the situation in Somalia is at a stage where a military solution is becoming more attractive and appearing to be more achievable to some Somali parties than it was a year or so ago. That is evidenced by the expansion of territorial control and other successes of the opposition armed groups.

The leaders and the people of Somalia are ultimately responsible for the fate of their country. All of them without exception need to come together and agree on a political framework to achieve peace and to decide on what should follow the transitional period. Therefore, the commitment to the Djibouti process and to the agreement to cease armed hostilities signed on 26 October are welcome, and we look forward to their ongoing compliance.

The international community clearly has no magic wand for resolving the Somali situation, but it could — and obviously should — do more to help the Somalis to settle one of the most persistent situations of violence and humanitarian suffering. The political process, including the coordinating role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, requires sustained international support. We welcome the contribution of the members of the international community to the Djibouti process. The unity of efforts with the strong coordinating role of the Special Representative is more crucial now that circumstances are increasingly challenging.

The resolution adopted today on the expansion of the sanctions regime against Somalia will, we hope, contribute to the early establishment of peace and stability in Somalia. On the peacekeeping track, it will be useful and perhaps unavoidable to presume a hostile environment. The Secretary-General makes that point clear in the report. In reality, it is a prerequisite for any kind of deployment that it enjoy the consent and acceptance of the leaders and a majority of the population of Somalia. The political framework therefore remains key to the success of United Nations involvement.

What is essential at this stage is the continued planning for and exploring of options and contributions. We want to ensure that, when the time comes for the international community to deploy a force, United Nations Member States and the Secretariat are well prepared.

In the meantime, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) remains central. We welcome the Secretary-General's continued support for AMISOM, but the urgent resolve of the United Nations and the international community to strengthen support for AMISOM is needed. AMISOM is facing greater challenges and, at the same time, is called on by the Djibouti agreement to assume greater responsibilities.

Finally, turning to the issue of piracy, we would like to reiterate our condemnation and deplore all acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships in the waters off the coast of Somalia. We would also like to extend our sympathies to the flag States and others that have fallen prey to such illegal acts. We are constantly reminded by the incidents that take place on an almost daily basis of the seriousness of the issue. Not only is it a threat to humanitarian assistance to Somalia and to the security of maritime activities off the coast of Somalia, but it also has an adverse impact on the social and economic of the affected countries.

For that reason, Indonesia supported resolution 1816 (2008) and 1838 (2008). They provide the required legal framework for assisting Somalia in fighting piracy and armed robbery against ships off the coast of that country. There can be no doubt of the importance of enhancing States' cooperation in curbing such acts. The issue of piracy off the coast of Somalia, however, as we and others have reiterated on various occasions, including in today's discussion, is the by-product of lawlessness and the lack of law enforcement capacity. The key to combating piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia lies in the political process, which needs to be continuously supported by the international community, including the Security Council.

Mr. Hoang Chi Trung (Viet Nam): Let me first of all thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2008/709) on the situation in Somalia. We also wish to thank Assistant Secretary-General Menkerios for his update on recent events, both inside and outside

Somalia, and for his views on the way forward. We are also very grateful for the statements and briefings made today by the Director of the Africa II Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization, the Permanent Observer of the African Union and the Permanent Representative of Somalia.

My delegation notes with appreciation the significant progress made by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia in the implementation of the Somali peace process, notably the signing on 26 October in Djibouti of two important documents: the modalities for the implementation of a cessation of armed confrontation and the joint declaration on common political aims. It is our sincere hope that they will pave the way towards a good-faith dialogue and mobilize the needed international assistance to help form a Somali unity Government, as outlined in article 9 of the Djibouti agreement. We are confident that this is a crucial step towards securing peace and stability in Somalia.

However, we remain concerned by the increasing insecurity in and off the coast of Somalia. On land, serious fighting among insurgent groups and against both the Ethiopian forces and African Union peacekeepers in the south-central regions and Mogadishu has resulted in the heavy loss of civilian lives. At sea, the surge in piracy and armed robbery against ships along the coast is truly alarming. Two recent cases of greatest concern to us were the capture by the pirates of the Ukrainian vessel *MV Faina*, carrying a large quantity of heavy weapons and small arms, and of an oil tanker belonging to Saudi Arabia.

We share the Secretary-General's assessment in his report that the deterioration of security and stability in Somalia poses an immense challenge not only to the ongoing peace process, but also to the delivery of humanitarian aid that is highly critical to the TFG's efforts to address the humanitarian crisis in Somalia.

Against that backdrop, simultaneous action on both the political and the security fronts is imperative. We therefore call upon the Somalis to engage in the peace process and faithfully to implement the Djibouti agreement and the agreement on the cessation of armed confrontation. We urge the international community to continue its efforts to develop a common approach to addressing the challenges facing Somalia. In that connection, we commend the African Union Mission in Somalia, the International Contact Group on Somalia, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and other regional organizations on their active role in the reconciliation process and their readiness to support the implementation of the Djibouti agreement.

If further progress in the political situation and improvements in the humanitarian situation in Somalia are to be achieved, we hold that the United Nations, in coordination with regional organizations, the African Union in particular, should extend the necessary financial, logistical and technical assistance to the TFG. My delegation also supports steps undertaken to achieve the early deployment of an international stabilization force in Somalia, as requested by the TFG and the African Union. In that regard, we welcome the Secretary-General's recent efforts to introduce a detailed plan for such a deployment and to begin identifying and approaching potential contributing Member States and to encourage them to participate in that multinational force.

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): Permit me to thank and commend you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting on so critical and difficult a situation as that in Somalia and to express our gratitude that it is being held in a public format. We should also like to thank the representatives of the Secretariat for their briefings. We have taken note of the Secretariat's support for the establishment of a multinational force and of the difficulties it is experiencing in that regard. In addition, we welcome the representative of the International Maritime Organization and listened carefully to his concerns at the situation of piracy in the region. Finally, we thank the representatives of Somalia and the African Union for their statements. We are heartened by their positive attitude towards the political solutions in Somalia, but we also agree with their support for the creation of a multinational force.

Panama is deeply concerned at the situation of instability in Somalia, not only because of the risks it poses to international peace and security, but also because it affects the humanitarian situation of the Somali people. There are few situations in the world so grave as that being endured in Somalia today. In that context, Panama has repeatedly requested that the United Nations lend effective support to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the only Mission that currently has any effectiveness in Somalia, and we regret that it has not been provided in

the form requested by AMISOM and the Secretary-General. Unfortunately, the bureaucratic structures of this Organization have prevented such support.

Furthermore, while we support the deployment of a multinational force, we are not unaware of the difficulties posed by the risks involved in establishing such a force, and we have heard a number of ideas about that here. Therefore, we reiterate once again that the Organization is obliged to effectively support AMISOM with the troops and materiel that it needs until something more substantive can be done.

With regard to the situation of piracy, which obviously concerns all of us and is linked to the situation in Somalia, we understand that that fact cannot prevent us from seeking individual solutions to it when required. The Security Council has proved that naval forces of various countries can come to the region with the approval of the Government of Somalia to try to stop that piracy. As stated by the representative of France, such Council authorization should be renewed and strengthened.

However, it is worrisome that military forces of various countries are operating independently in a region as narrow as Somalia's territorial waters and the Gulf of Aden. Panama believes that the Security Council should review that situation and consider the possibility of providing some form of coordination of those forces under the leadership of the United Nations.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish to thank Mr. Haile Menkerios, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, and Mr. Raisedon Zenenga, Director of the Africa II Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, for their briefings. I welcome the presence of Mr. Efthimios Mitropoulos, Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization, and thank him for his briefing. In addition, I welcome the Permanent Representative of Somalia and the Permanent Observer of the African Union (AU) and thank them for their briefings.

China is following closely the developments in Somalia. We appreciate the earnest efforts of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) to promote political reconciliation in Somalia. Not long ago, the TFG and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS) held negotiations and reached an agreement in Djibouti. We welcome that development and highly appreciate the efforts of Special Representative Ould-Abdallah in that regard.

The priority now is to ensure swift implementation of the agreement. We earnestly appeal to all relevant political factions in Somalia to heed the Somali people's aspirations to peace, to place national interests above all other considerations and to strive to truly put the political reconciliation process on a substantive track at an early date.

We are deeply concerned at the grave security situation in Somalia. The international community must work vigorously to help Somalia improve its security situation while supporting the country's peace process. China highly appreciates the important role played by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in improving the security situation in Somalia. Whether AMISOM can perform its duties smoothly under the current circumstances is crucial to the security situation.

In his report (S/2008/709), the Secretary-General calls on Member States that have committed to sending troops to AMISOM to fulfil their commitments as soon as possible. He also calls on the international community to provide financial and logistical support to AMISOM. China appreciates and supports his appeal. In 2007, at the request of the AU, China provided $300,000 to assist AMISOM in its peacekeeping operation in Somalia. China will continue to give positive consideration to such requests from the AU.

China consistently maintains that the United Nations should be actively engaged on the Somali issue. We call on the Security Council to heed the strong appeal of the Somali Government and the AU and to send United Nations peacekeeping troops to Somalia as soon as possible to take over from the AU peacekeeping Mission there. In that regard, we call on the Secretariat to put forward a concrete plan and submit it to the Council. At the same time, we call on all factions in Somalia to work actively to create conditions in the country that would support the early deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation.

We have taken note of the ongoing consultations between the Secretary-General and the affected countries on the deployment of an international stabilization force to Somalia. If constituted promptly, such a force could serve as a transition to the United Nations peacekeeping operation and could contribute to our response to the security situation in Somalia. We

encourage the Secretary-General to continue his efforts in that regard.

Piracy off the coast of Somalia is increasing and poses a grave threat to the security of international navigation and the delivery of international humanitarian assistance. Since the beginning of the year, the Security Council has adopted resolutions 1816 (2008) and 1838 (2008) on the issue. That not only shows the international community's sense of urgency in its resolve to combat piracy with concerted efforts, but also lays the legal foundation for the fight against piracy off the coast of Somalia.

As piracy is a challenge to all countries, meeting that challenge requires strengthened international coordination. China expects the United Nations to play a leading role in that regard. We also believe that the piracy issue is merely a symptom of Somalia's deep-seated political and social crisis.

Piracy cannot be effectively eliminated unless the domestic crisis in Somalia is resolved. The international community's concern about the piracy off Somalia's coast should not distract our attention from the root cause of the increase in piracy. The international community should continue to work to find a comprehensive solution to the question of Somalia.

Mr. Grauls (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): We have taken note of the briefings made to us today by the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Assistant Secretary-General Menkerios and the representative of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as well as of the additional information provided by the representatives of the African Union and the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia. I should like comment on four issues.

First, with regard to the humanitarian situation, like previous delegations, Belgium is of course extremely concerned about the ongoing deterioration of the humanitarian situation and its tragic impact on a population that is already extremely vulnerable. In that regard, we would like to pay tribute to the courage of the staff of United Nations and non-governmental organizations, who continue to work under very difficult and dangerous circumstances. In that context, attacks on humanitarian workers are all the more intolerable, for they clearly illustrate the disdain of perpetrators for the very survival of the people they purport to defend. We would like to associate ourselves with the Secretary-General's appeal to all parties to fully abide by their commitments and respect the most basic obligations.

Secondly, with regard to the political situation, my delegation welcomes the progress achieved by the Transitional Federal Government and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia in implementing the Djibouti agreement. As fragile as it may be, that progress certainly deserves support. Belgium therefore welcomes the support provided by the States of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the International Contact Group. We also call upon all regional and international actors to commit themselves to support that process and to encourage all parties to join it.

However, those positive developments should not lead us to forget a far more gloomy reality. First of all, we must acknowledge that the institutions of the Transitional Federal Government continue to be undermined by internal disagreement. Belgium calls upon the signatories to the agreements to demonstrate political will and genuine leadership, commensurate with the seriousness of the country's problems, so as to implement the agreements reached within the specified time frames.

We also note that the political progress has not had the expected impact on the security situation; to the contrary, the security situation has deteriorated and brought the country to the very edge of the abyss. At this stage, only a more inclusive political process holds out the hope for lasting stabilization in the country. The opening up of the Djibouti process to all Somali political parties is an important political development. We call upon all actors to join that process, thereby demonstrating their ability to place the greater public good above their own interests.

Thirdly, with regard to the security situation, we thank the Department of Peacekeeping Operations for the operational details it has provided, which could still be more detailed. However, we ultimately agree with the analysis of the Secretary-General that the current situation does not meet the requirements for the imminent deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation.

Moreover, the international stabilization force envisaged in the report (S/2008/709) of the Secretary-General is basically an expansion of the current

African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), albeit clearly strengthened. While we await more clarity as to the readiness of certain States to assume leadership of such a force, the urgency of the situation should result in increased support for AMISOM. Following months of efforts to find additional resources for AMISOM, it is evident that any positive response is intrinsically linked to the demonstrated ability of the parties to the Djibouti agreement to assume their own responsibilities and to implement on the ground the commitments they have made. That is especially the case as regards the establishment of joint police and security forces that can take on greater responsibility for security. At the same time, the international community should continue its capacity-building efforts and work in a pragmatic way to ensure the successful delivery and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance.

Fourthly, with regard to combating piracy — as other delegations have also mentioned — yet again this week, acts of piracy off the coast of Somalia have reached proportions that clearly point to the need for urgent action by the international community. The European Union's Operation Atalanta, to which the representative of the French delegation referred during his statement and which will be deployed next month, will spearhead efforts to combat piracy. Beyond deploying additional means of combating piracy, one of the major objectives of Operation Atalanta will be to bolster cooperation among existing initiatives. In the context of its European and international responsibilities, Belgium is considering the possibility of providing a vessel to Operation Atalanta in 2009. In that regard, Belgium reaffirms its readiness to cooperate to extend the measures put in place by resolution 1816 (2008) so as to provide the necessary framework for European and international efforts.

With regard to jurisdiction issues arising from the detention of perpetrators of acts of piracy, we urge a pragmatic approach that takes into consideration bilateral agreements and the views expressed in the relevant multilateral forums, in particular at the International Maritime Organization.

Finally, with regard to the adoption of resolution 1844 (2008) and its regime of individual sanctions, we welcome the fact that the international community now has at its disposal an additional tool to strengthen stabilization and assistance efforts on behalf of Somalia by isolating those who aim to impede the peace process and deprive the most vulnerable members of the population of the most basic humanitarian assistance.

Mr. Jurica (Croatia): I would like to join others in thanking Assistant Secretary-General Menkerios, the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IOM), the Director of the Africa II Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), the Permanent Representative of Somalia and the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations for their briefings and interventions.

We take note of the report (S/2008/709) of the Secretary-General and the observations contained therein. I must admit that they provide us with a rather bleak picture. Bearing that in mind, allow me to make a number of short observations.

We believe that true progress on the political track is the essence of a sustainable, long-term solution. In that regard, we welcome the progress made with respect to the Djibouti peace process, in particular the technical signing of the Djibouti agreement on 19 August and the signing of a cessation of armed confrontation agreement on 26 October.

We commend the parties — the Transitional Federal Government and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia — on the commitment to the peace process they have demonstrated thus far. We hope that determination will be further translated into concrete measures, in particular with respect to the implementation of the cessation of the armed confrontation agreement and the establishment of a Government of national unity.

We also echo the Secretary-General's call for all Somalis to join the peace process. That being said, we hope that the aforementioned developments will have a real impact.

The overall security situation gives very little room for optimism. The continuing insurgency by Al-Shabaab and alarming reports on the possibility of the targeting of the United Nations in Somalia itself and in neighbouring countries in another major terrorist attack are a source for concern. The targeting of United Nations personnel and humanitarian workers, whose unyielding efforts to alleviate the dire situation for the people in Somalia we value greatly, is not only morally

repugnant, but should be dealt with severely, as stipulated by the relevant Security Council resolutions.

We welcome the consolidated description of a feasible international stabilization force, as presented in the Secretary-General's report, and the subsequent efforts of the Secretary-General to raise the issue with potential lead countries and troop-contributing countries. We hope those efforts will bear fruit, leading shortly to a robust multinational force on the ground in Mogadishu. In the meantime, with the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), the efforts of which we value and commend, on the ground and in the light of the announced role of the Ethiopian troops, we echo the Secretary-General's call for the strengthening of AMISOM's capacities.

My delegation shares the great concerns expressed by Council members about the effect that the continuing deterioration in security is having on the already dire humanitarian situation and the civilian population. The reports from the field about civilians being at the mercy of all parties involved in the conflict are extremely disturbing. All parties to the conflict should be held equally accountable for violations of international humanitarian law, including guarantees for the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid. In a situation in which more than 3 million Somalis are in dire need of assistance, humanitarian access should continue to be a priority for the international community as a whole.

Finally, we have strongly supported and will continue to support the efforts made thus far by the Security Council, regional organizations — in particular NATO, with its current operation, and the African Union stepping in for NATO in December — and individual countries in addressing the scourge of piracy off the coast of Somalia. However, we bear in mind that piracy in Somalia is only a symptom of a much large malaise and the desperate need for a holistic approach. We in Croatia stand ready to work with others towards identifying that approach for the sake of the Somali people.

Mr. Dolgov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank the representatives of the Secretariat, first and foremost Assistant Secretary-General Menkerios, for having presented the Secretary-General's report on Somalia (S/2008/709). We also listened carefully to the statements made by the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization and the representatives of the African Union and Somalia. We are grateful for their assessments and considerations.

Recently, the Security Council has devoted increasing attention to the situation in Somalia. A set of resolutions and presidential statements has been adopted in support of the political settlement in the country and the fight against piracy. Today we adopted a new, important resolution on a mechanism of targeted sanctions against those who obstruct the peace process and continue to supply arms to Somalia in violation of the arms embargo. We expect the resolution to be effectively implemented and to promote the stabilization of the situation in and around Somalia.

In Moscow, we welcomed the signing of the Djibouti agreement between the Transitional Federal Government and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia. We call upon both sides to comply with the agreements achieved. We encourage those representatives of parties who did not join the agreement to do so as quickly as possible. We also welcome the signing by the Somali sides, on 26 October 2008 in Djibouti, of an agreement on the cessation of armed confrontation, which provides for a ceasefire regime. We expect all participants in the conflict to cooperate constructively to fully honour their obligations, promote the process of strengthening society, and restore state authority and lasting peace in Somalia.

The main responsibility for overcoming the protracted crisis lies first and foremost with Somalis themselves. There is a need to enhance the effectiveness of the work of State organs of power to resolve the complex issues facing Somalia. The Russian Federation supports the efforts undertaken by the Transitional Federal Government aimed at restoring the rule of law, achieving national reconciliation and ensuring State sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the country.

The current realities are such, however, that despite these efforts and the often selfless activities of the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), the situation remains especially complex. We are especially concerned by the continuing deterioration of the security situation in Somalia and the increasing danger that the conflict will spread throughout the region. Any escalation in tensions clearly risks destabilizing a very complex situation in the Horn of

Africa. We note increased cases of violations of the arms embargo in Somalia, which fans the flames of conflict in Somalia. We call upon all States to halt any supply of arms to Somalia. Neighbouring countries can and must play a constructive role in settling the crisis.

Unfortunately, we are forced to note an increase in the numbers of attacks against the staff of humanitarian organizations and United Nations staff working in Somalia and an increase in the number of casualties among the peaceful population. Of special concern is the increased number of children killed or injured as a result of the use of force.

The Russian Federation is seriously concerned about the difficult humanitarian situation in Somalia. This year, the Government of the Russian Federation provided $1 million as a contribution to the trust fund of the World Food Programme to provide food supplies to the population of Somalia. We have also provided humanitarian assistance.

The Russian Federation is especially concerned about the growing number of acts of piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia. In their criminal activities, pirates are using increasingly sophisticated methods and means and their ambition is growing. The Russian naval fleet is participating actively in international efforts to combat piracy in the region, pursuant to resolution 1816 (2008). The Russian minesweeper *Nyeustrashimy* is currently patrolling off the coast of Somalia in cooperation with the military vessels of other Governments cooperating with the Transitional Federal Government. The Russian Federation will continue to take additional measures in this field.

We are convinced that, if the anti-piracy measures approved by the Security Council are to be effectively implemented, there is a need for agreed and well-coordinated action between States. Heightened attention must also be paid to issues related to the detention of individuals who participate in piracy and armed robbery on the high seas and to determine the jurisdiction for those individuals.

I must agree with the opinion voiced here today that the use of force alone, no matter how effective, will not resolve the problem of piracy. I share the view that was voiced that the successful long-term socio-economic rehabilitation and political stabilization of Somalia are the key factors that will determine the effective resolution of the problems of piracy. Undoubtedly, the use of force will be required and it will have to be used in accordance with the relevant decisions of the Security Council.

We continue to support the activities of AMISOM in Somalia. The full-fledged deployment of the Mission will, of course, promote the creation of conditions for the effective promotion of the process of national reconciliation. At the same time, we maintain our belief that the prospect of the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Somalia continues to depend directly on the dedication of the Somalis themselves to peace and on there being significant improvement in the security situation and serious progress in political reconciliation. Thus far, unfortunately, no such conditions have been established yet in Somalia. We recognize the efforts there, first and foremost, the efforts of Somalis themselves, but, I repeat, thus far, the necessary conditions are absent.

We share the view that a full-fledged implementation of the Djibouti agreement will become an important step in creating such conditions. Quite clearly, there is a need to continue relevant preparatory work within the framework of the United Nations. Unfortunately, the absence of any marked improvement in the security situation thus far casts doubt on the possible success of an operation involving a multinational force. We are carefully following discussions regarding this problem. However, in our view, achieving tangible progress regarding the Djibouti agreement could be an important factor that could prompt potential troop-contributing countries and suppliers of materiel to provide such resources for a multinational force.

So, the key factor today remains the need to achieve progress in the political field. We believe that all Somali players should make the requisite efforts to this end.

Ms. DiCarlo (United States of America): I would like to thank the Assistant Secretary-General, Mr. Zenenga, the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the Permanent Representative of the African Union and the Permanent Representative of Somalia for their briefings today.

The United States reiterates its support for the Djibouti dialogue process under the leadership of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ould Abdallah, and the process outlined by the Transitional

Federal Charter. We call on all Somali stakeholders, including the leadership of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), to engage constructively in this process in the interests of establishing lasting peace, stability and effective governance in Somalia.

In paragraph 103 of the report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2008/709), dated 17 November 2008, the Secretary-General states that

> "the international community's strategy for addressing the multiple threats to regional stability ... that emanate from Somalia [should] be coherent".

We could not agree more. The Council cannot take a piecemeal approach to dealing with these problems.

The problem of piracy off the coast of Somalia is a key example. Although we may be tempted to address piracy as a discrete issue, it is a direct result of the lack of rule of law and desperate economic conditions on the ground. Likewise, the political situation, security situation and humanitarian situation are closely interrelated.

We are encouraged by the signing on 26 October of the cessation of armed confrontation agreement, as well as an agreement to form a unity government between the Transitional Federal Government and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia. However, this political progress is being threatened by the deteriorating security situation. The international community must take immediate steps to stabilize the situation so that the political process can continue.

The United States notes with appreciation the Secretariat's concept brief for an international stabilization force. We believe that the admirable performance of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), including its key role in facilitating continued humanitarian deliveries to Somalia, proves that peacekeeping forces can play an invaluable role in the country, even in the absence of a multinational force. It is crucial that the international community be prepared to support AMISOM with all the tools at its disposal so that Somalis will continue to receive food.

We have listened carefully to the representative of the African Union and we believe that we must consider all options at our disposal, including the mechanism of a United Nations peacekeeping operation, if a multinational force cannot be generated. With that in mind, we believe that it is prudent to have contingency planning for every scenario.

The United States also condemns the acts of piracy that we have seen in recent months. We also strongly support renewing the authorities in resolution 1816 (2008) to combat piracy and will work with other members of the Council to that end. It is obvious from this week's news that piracy is a growing problem and that the authorities under resolution 1816 (2008) must not be allowed to lapse for even a day.

Finally, we would like to support the European Union initiative to combat piracy and NATO's proposal to assist with escorting world food shipments in the interim.

Sir John Sawers (United Kingdom): I would like to join others in thanking our briefers today, perhaps above all, the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), whose presence today is very welcome. I thank him for his contribution.

We have seen the report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/709). It gives us a thorough and realistic analysis of what is clearly a very bleak picture on the ground in Somalia. That situation on the ground seems to be getting worse in three different dimensions.

First, in the area of security on land, our hopes had been raised by the Djibouti agreement, and the work to implement it was moving forward. But, the hope that Somalia was finally turning a corner after some 17 years of violence had not been followed through on the ground. Despite the best efforts of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ould Abdallah in mediating dialogue, the political process now looks fragile, not helped, it has to be said, by the divisions that have opened up within the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). The recent reports of heightened violence and territorial advances by the Al-Shebaab movement suggest a worsening security situation. So the situation on the ground in Somalia is getting worse, not better.

Secondly, security at sea is also getting dramatically worse, as colleagues have said. The incidence of piracy off the Somali coast has reached new heights in the last weeks. We deplore those acts of piracy, which can only make it even more difficult to bring stability to Somalia itself. The United Kingdom is playing a full part in the international deployments to try to combat this situation. We have a frigate of the

Royal Navy dealing full time with piracy and two others frigates deployed in the area ready to act. We have also offered to support the upcoming European Union mission by providing the operational headquarters and by commanding the operation.

Resolution 1816 (2008), due for renewal next month, authorizes those operations. We need to look carefully at it to ensure that the mandate for the naval operations gives those in the field the means needed to suppress and deter piracy. Addressing the piracy problem cannot wait until peace and harmony return to Somalia.

Thirdly, as the Secretary-General's report notes, the humanitarian situation is getting worse again. Over 3 million Somalis are now dependent on food aid. Securing humanitarian access remains a pressing and difficult challenge. We would welcome advice from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in the near future on how to address this problem.

So what do we do in the face of these difficulties? I agree with my colleague, Ambassador Kumalo: the problem of Somalia is not going to be resolved solely by addressing the issue of piracy or tackling the humanitarian problem on the ground. But equally, as we have so often said in this Chamber and as we have heard again today from several delegates, we cannot just address this problem with a military solution. There has to be a political framework.

From our perspective, we believe that the Council should send a clear message that the best way forward for Somalia is through the full implementation of the Djibouti agreement, which would give the space for the international community to assist.

But we still do have to deal with the Somalia that we find, the Somalia that exists, and not the Somalia that we would like to see, and that has to shape our approach to the idea of an international force on the ground.

The Secretary-General has invited the Security Council to send a force to take responsibility for security in Mogadishu and to enable the Ethiopian forces to withdraw. The Secretary-General's report is very clear about the options for such a force. Its firm recommendation – which we think is based on sound military analysis – is that a multinational force has to go in first to secure the situation on the ground and create the conditions that would allow a United Nations peacekeeping operation to go in. Frankly, it is hard to envisage a traditional United Nations peacekeeping force having the capabilities or the mandate required to deal with the challenges that Somalia currently poses. This Council should not mandate a force which we do not think is up to the task. We must learn the lessons from elsewhere of what happens when we send an underequipped force into a theatre where conflict persists.

We therefore encourage the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to identify States willing to contribute to a multinational force as soon as possible. In doing so, he will need high-level political support from Council members. We have heard some fine words around this table today; let us hope that delegations can take the steps necessary to turn those fine words into hard offers of military contributions.

We would also welcome further work by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to prepare for the time when a peacekeeping operation is feasible, including being ready to conduct a technical assessment mission as soon as conditions on the ground allow.

Somalia is arguably the most intractable challenge facing the Security Council in the period ahead. I know that all of us around this table feel the need to act and to shoulder our responsibilities here, but we have to learn the lessons of experience – not only in Somalia, but also elsewhere, including, for example, in Darfur. The report of the Secretary-General may not satisfy all of us in all respects, but it is a sober and responsible effort to identify the very limited options that are available to the Council. We believe that we should proceed with our deliberations on the basis of this report.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Costa Rica.

I would like to begin by welcoming the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization and thanking him for the briefing he has given us. I also thank Mr. Menkerios, Mr. Zenenga, the representative of Somalia and the observer of the African Union.

Like other Council members, and Ambassador Sawers in particular, I believe that the Council is

facing an important decision. We trust that we will be given the information, and we will conduct the analysis and debate necessary to define the nature of our intervention in Somalia. This is crucial; it is something that we will be discussing in the future.

We welcomed the signing of the Addis Ababa agreement, as well as the significant progress in the discussions between the Transitional Federal Government and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia on the implementation of the Djibouti agreement, in particular with respect to the implementation of the mandates of the Joint Security Committee and the High-Level Committee. We believe it is important that the groups that have not yet done so should join this agreement, which remains open; in that way, they would become a constructive part of the peace process in Somalia.

For Costa Rica, as well as for other delegations, it is particularly disturbing to see the deterioration in the security situation during the period under review. We deplore in particular the fact that United Nations personnel, including local staff, the personnel of organizations that provide humanitarian assistance and other international personnel have been the direct targets of killings, kidnappings and extortion by armed groups. We consider this to be unacceptable. Also, we are concerned that past United Nations efforts have not yielded results owing to extraneous circumstances, such as the failure to pay police salaries, which have hampered the achievement of the objectives we all seek.

We believe that progress in the political and security situation is necessary for the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance to the population of Somalia. We all know that if the security situation does not improve, more people require humanitarian assistance. For Costa Rica, it is crucial to protect and facilitate the delivery of such assistance. My delegation welcomed the inclusion of wording along those lines in resolution 1816 (2008), and we hope that that dimension will also be included in the preparations for a future intervention in Somalia.

We agree, moreover, with the Secretary-General that one of the first objectives in Somalia will be to secure the airport and seaport of Mogadishu, even though we understand that this will only be the beginning of the task of providing security and ensuring delivery of humanitarian assistance.

With respect to piracy off the coast of Somalia, my delegation expresses concern over the increasing number of cases of armed robbery and kidnappings on the sea. We note and are grateful for the efforts made by the countries that have come forward to comply with the provisions of resolution 1816 (2008) and to ensure a coordinated international effort to combat acts of piracy.

We agree with the Secretary-General that it is crucial to maintain coherence in international efforts in Somalia in order to address the various aspects of this conflict. Thus, the establishment of links between the African Union Mission in Somalia, the current anti-piracy operation and future interventions should make it possible to effectively respond to the causes and consequences of lawlessness in Somalia, which now poses a threat to international peace and security.

Finally my delegation has carefully studied the observations made by the Secretary-General. As I said earlier, we need further analysis and more information in order to take part in a discussion on the nature of an intervention. We hope that the countries and organizations that have the capacity to provide personnel and resources necessary to take part in those efforts will respond to the call of the Secretary-General.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I invite Council members to informal consultations on this item at 3 p.m. today.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.